

search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.”

Applicants request that the examiner reconsider her position regarding this restriction requirement and examine the claims of Group I and II as one invention, for the reason set forth above. Additionally, it would not present an undue burden on the examiner to search the subject matter of the remaining claims in groups III-XVIII.

### CONCLUSION

Applicants, of course, reserve the right to file divisional applications covering the subject matter of the non-elected claims.

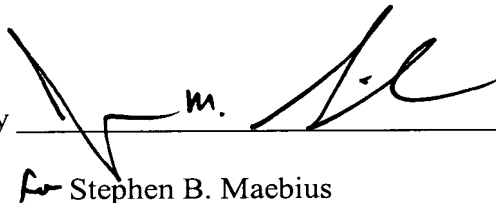
Applicants respectfully request examination on the merits of this application. Should there be any questions concerning this application, Examiner Qian is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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